by the year 2000 India will have those levels of production from wherever they are available, within India or outside so that what the Member has just mentioned about the investments made in the refining sector is justified for refining capacity of over 102 million tonnes throughout is justified.

DR. NAUNIHAL SINGH: Will the hon. Member state whether it is true that by setting up new oil refineries in the private sector it will not only be that the indigenous demands will be met but the products also will be available at cheaper rates than what we have now? Please confirm or deny this.

CAPT. SATISH SHARMA: Sir, the oil business being what it is, you know, the international oil price dictates the prices of other products. The prices last year were soft. We were fortunate that the prices in the last one year were stable. The prices are slightly firming up this year in spite of increased oil production. This year in spite of increased oil production, because the oil prices internationally are firming up, that is not helping the situation. So, it is very difficult for me to say at a given time. What the international prices are and how they are going to reflect on the price of oil products.

Development and maintenance of National Highways in Tamil Nadu

*3. SHRI V. RAJAN CHELLAPPA:†
SHRI S. AUSTIN:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the amount provided for development and widening of National Highways in Tamil Nadu during the last two years;

(b) the number of National Highways in the State taken up for development, maintenance and repairs and the progress made in this regard during the last two years; and

(c) by when the work is likely to be completed?

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri V. Rajan Chellappa

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) The amount provided for development including widening of National Highways was Rs. 16.00 crores and Rs. 31.5 crores during 1992-93 and 1993-94 respectively.

(b) and (c) Development and Maintenance of National Highways is a continuous process. There are nine National Highways passing through the State of Tamil Nadu. In all, there are 106 development projects under various stages of progress. Out of these, 84 projects are likely to be completed by March, 1995. During the last 2 years, 40 projects at an aggregate amount of about Rs. 11.00 crores have been sanctioned.

SHRI V. RAJAN CHELLAPPA: The East Coast road project for connecting Kanyakumari to Madras has been hanging fire for several years. This is a very important national highway connecting parts of Madras, Pondicherry, Cuddanore and Tuticorin. Therefore, I would like to know the revised estimate of the East Coast Roads Scheme, how much has been allotted so far and when the scheme is likely to be finished.

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER: Sir, I have a list of all the projects which have been sanctioned in 1992-93 and 1993-94. I do not have exactly the details about the East Coast Road. I think that is still being worked out in the Ministry.

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI: During 1992-93 and 1993-94, the amount for development as well as the widening of the National Highways is Rs. 47.5 crores. Out of that, according to the statement of the Minister, only Rs. 11 crores have been spent so far. That means more than Rs. 36 crores have been yet to be spent before the coming March. It clearly shows that the National Highways work is not being expedited as expected. Therefore, I want

to know whether the Government would expedite the projects, especially for Tamil Nadu to be completed before March. I would also like to know whether the Government is going to spend the amount provided for it. I am asking this question because out of the amount actually earmarked for Tamil Nadu, the Railway Department has diverted Rs. 18 crores to Karnataka. The same thing should not happen in the case of the amount allotted for roads in Tamil Nadu. So, kindly let us know what amount you have provided for Tamil Nadu and what you have spent.

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER: I would like to allay the fears in the mind of the hon. Member by saying that we will not be diverting any amount from Tamil Nadu to another State. We will spend all the money required and sanctioned for the State. I would like to inform the hon. Member that with the amount which has been sanctioned in 1993-94, we expect it to be completed by September 1995. I have given you the targeted date on which the work is to be completed. I am sure that this money will be spent in Tamil Nadu and I hope that by the likely dates the work would be completed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. J. P. Mathur. Is it about Tamil Nadu?

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर : महोदय, मैं अभी हाल में रामेश्वरम् गया था। अभी मेरे सहयोगी ने ईस्ट-वेस्ट कोस्ट के बारे में पूछा है। क्या मंत्री महोदय को मालूम है कि यह सड़क रामेश्वरम् को कनेक्ट करती है जो कि एक तीर्थ स्थान है। उधर से यह पांडिचेरी आदि को भी कनेक्ट करती है। क्या मंत्री महोदय को यह भी मालूम है कि इसके किनारे पर नमक बनाने वालों की बहुत बड़ी संख्या है जिनके कारण व्यापार में तकलीफ हो रही है और इसके साथ साथ जो तीर्थ यात्री वहां जाते हैं उनको भी परेशानी होती है? क्या आपके पास तीर्थ यात्रियों और नमक बनाने वालो के पिछले सालों के अंदर रिप्रेजन्टेशन नहीं आए हैं? अगर आए है तो आपने उनके ऊपर क्या किया है? आप इस सड़क को कब ठीक करेंगे क्योंकि रामेश्वरम् जाने के लिए यह एक महत्वपूर्ण रास्ता है?

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER: There is a demand not only for the development of Rameswaram but there are demands from Members of Parliament from all the States for development of roads and declaring new National Highways and repairing of the roads...(Interruptions).. I have just completed one-quarter of my answer to your question. I am yet to answer three-fourth. For centuries we have salt workers there. There are new business ventures which have come up. Therefore, the road is required. This place has got a religious significance. So, we have requested for funds. I am sorry to say that we are getting only 45 per cent of our requirements of the funds from the Central Government.

I would like to inform the hon. Members that we are working out a scheme. I think that very soon, by the end of this month the Central Government and the State Governments would be allocated more funds; and we would take up both the works on a priority basis.

SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, there has been a disparity in the allotment of funds. Tamil Nadu has not been provided the same funds as have been provided to the adjoining States. May I know from the hon. Minister on what basis funds are being provided to the different States? How is it being provided? I would like to know whether any equity is being maintained between one State and another on the basis of the mileage of the Highways.

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, for ongoing works whatever norms have been set by the Central Government in respect of the State Governments, we are keeping their priority. Well, I do not have information regard-

ing parity in allocation of funds. I would arrange to send it to the hon. Member.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the hon. Member, Mr. Rajan Chellappa had put a very pertinent question regaring the East Cost road which connects Madras and Rameswaram Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry are not having the same railway traffic as the adjoining States of Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Karnataka are having. The main mode of transport for goods and for passengers is only by the road. The East Coast project was started in 1985. The project had been sanctioned and funds were allocated but it is moving at a snail's pace. After ten years even 100 KMs stretch of road between Madras and Mahabalipuram has not been completed. Some people have field a petition on the ground of environment. Now, it has been cleared. If this construction work goes up at this pace, then, construction of road up to Rameswaram would take more than 25 years. My worry is that there will be a cost escalation and time overrun. With the cost escalation the Central Government has to add to its original budget and the Government has to lose.

Now, Sir, the private sector people are coming forward to invest in the road sector. In this connection, the hon. Minister has also announced a scheme. In Tamil Nadu the people are very much depending upon the roads.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What is your question?

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: I am coming to my question. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government of India has received any proposal for private investment from foreign countries in the road sector and if so, whether they are going to consider these on a priority basis in connecting important State capitals so that traffic movement is more.

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, we have received a lot of proposals from foreign investors as well as Indian companies who would like to build these express ways. We are working on them on a priority basis. Then, we would give these to them.

I would like to add to the answer which I have given earlier to a question put by the hon. Member on the East Coast road which I was not able to answer then. I was wondering myself as to why I was not ready with an answer. I just came to know that the East Coast road is a State project; and it does not come under the Central Government. However, that is also being developed with the assistance of the Asian Development Bank.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Q. No. 4.

SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Yes, Sir, Q. No. 4.

New Trust for Construction of Temple of Ayodhya

*4. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Supreme Court has returned the reference of Ayodhya issue back to the Government;

(b) if so, what further action Government propose to take or have already taken thereafter;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government have decided to form a new trust for the construction o temple at Ayodhya; and

(d) if so, when and what are the other details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI S. B. CHAVAN): (a) and (b) The Supreme Court of India vide its judgement dated the 24th October, 1994, in the proceedings related to the validity of the Acquisition of Certain Area at Ayodhya Ordinance| Act, 1993 and the maintainability of